

And below this original votive-memento another panel has been somewhat awkwardly introduced across the framework bearing this record:—

ON THE REACTION OF THE PRESENT MISSION-HOUSE  
A.D. 1782.  
THIS ARTIST CHIMNEY-PRECE  
(A PART OF THE OLD HICKES HALL)  
WAS PLACED IN THIS ROOM, TO PERPETUATE  
THE MEMORY OF SIR  
BYL. HICKES,  
AS SET FORTH IN THE ABOVE INSCRIPTION.

The carved work above the mantel is finished with colours, and is heightened with gold.

Above the general work of the chimney-piece exist some remains of pilasters cut off abruptly, which seem to have formed a portion of the wainscoting of the old Hickes's Hall. This chimney-piece does not accord in any respect with the room in which it is fixed, which is a plain, uncarved, modern one. We think so worthy an act of munificence was worthily seconded by placing it in the present building; and that, to prevent it from seeming to be out of place, the whole room should be fitted up in the same style to agree with it. Few examples like that of Sir Baptist Hickes occur, comparatively few men having the means to accomplish so generous and praiseworthy a public service.

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#### FALL OF A NEW MILL AT OLDHAM.

ONE of the most extensively fatal catastrophes that has happened in the neighbourhood of Manchester for many years past—one, indeed, more terrific in its nature, and more fatal and disastrous in its consequences, than any thing that has occurred since a similar catastrophe at the fire-proof factory of Mr. Nathan Gough, near Oldfield-road, Salford, on Wednesday, the 13th of October, 1824, by which eighteen or nineteen persons lost their lives,—occurred on Thursday, the 31st ultimo, in a suburb of Oldham, named Lower-house, Greenacres-moor, at the mills of Messrs. Samuel Radcliffe and Sons, called the Lower-house Mills. The firm (now consisting of Messrs. Josiah Radcliffe and Brothers, the four sons of the deceased Mr. Samuel Radcliffe) had recently built a new mill adjoining one end of their old fabric; and about half-past three o'clock on Thursday afternoon the whole of this new mill fell in with a tremendous crash, at a time when there were thirty-two persons in it, of whom there is reason to fear that twenty-one have been killed, five more or less hurt, of whom one is not expected to recover, and six have escaped with little or no injury.

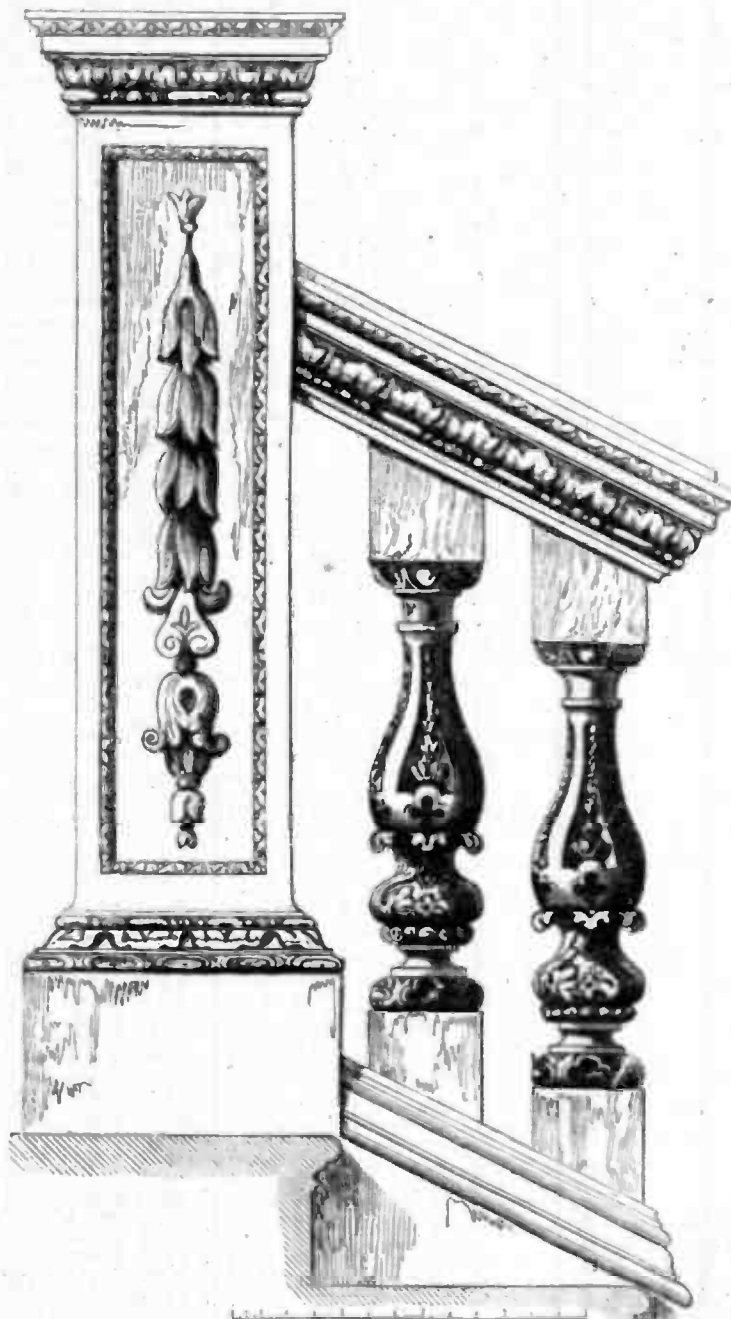
One of the assigned causes of this awful catastrophe is that an iron beam, from some cause, broke in two, in or near the middle, and thus the superincumbent weight brought down the other beams, and, indeed, the entire floor, which, in its fall, carried the others with it. This is the opinion of one of the Messrs. Radcliffe.

During Wednesday the millwrights had been engaged in putting-up and connecting shafting, &c., in order to prepare the rooms for the reception of the machinery which was to arrive in a day or two. The shafting was worked a little on Wednesday night; and the twist-ers in had placed several power-looms in the upper floors on the day of the accident. The only other machinery in the building consisted of twisting and drawing frames, which were all in the lowest room, over the boilers. Had the accident occurred six weeks later, the whole building would have been filled with machinery, and with a full complement of hands, in which case the loss of life might have been much greater. The principal beams, cross or short beams, and iron pillars, were all manufactured expressly for the new building, by Messrs. Savilles and Wolstenhulme, of Lower Moor Iron Works, Oldham. The beams were laid across the building, there being three separate beams or lengths in each range, the ends resting on and clipping the pillars. Each beam measuring about 14 feet in length, and was stated to be "of the form generally used for fire-proof buildings;" the ends being clipped together by wrought-iron straps. Messrs. Savilles and Wolstenhulme state that the iron

was partly Scotch, and partly from Staffordshire, and that it was used in the proportion of one-third of cold-blast iron to two-thirds of ordinary pig-iron. These beams average a weight of about three-quarters of a cwt. per foot, and some of their weights, as taken from the makers' books, are 22 cwt. 3 qrs. 20 lb.; 25 cwt. 3 qrs. 2 lb.; 24 cwt. 3 qrs.; 24 cwt. 2 qrs. 6 lb.; and two beams together weighed

49 cwt. 1 qr. 20 lb. Messrs. Radcliffe also stated, that each beam had been tested to bear a weight of eight tons, and Messrs. Savilles and Wolstenhulme shewed where the testing had been conducted, each beam having, according to their statement, borne a weight suspended from its middle, of 12 tons of pig-iron. The pillars are of cast-iron, and hollow, weighing about 6 cwt. each.

#### STAIRCASE-BALUSTRADE BY INIGO JONES, AT AMESBURY, WILTS.



#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

Sir,—I send you another sketch to illustrate Inigo Jones's skill in designing staircases. It is from Amesbury, in Wiltshire, the building of which was designed by Inigo, but executed by his nephew and pupil, Mr. Webb. Two plans and an elevation are to be found in the 3rd volume of Colin Campbell's "Vitruvius Britannicus," wherein, however, the staircase itself is not sufficiently made out.

I should like to have accompanied the sketch with the plan and section of the staircase, which is a celebrated example, as it contains a back or servants' staircase within the principal one. I shall probably send you other sketches of it at a future opportunity.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

C. J. RICHARDSON.

22, Brompton-crescent.